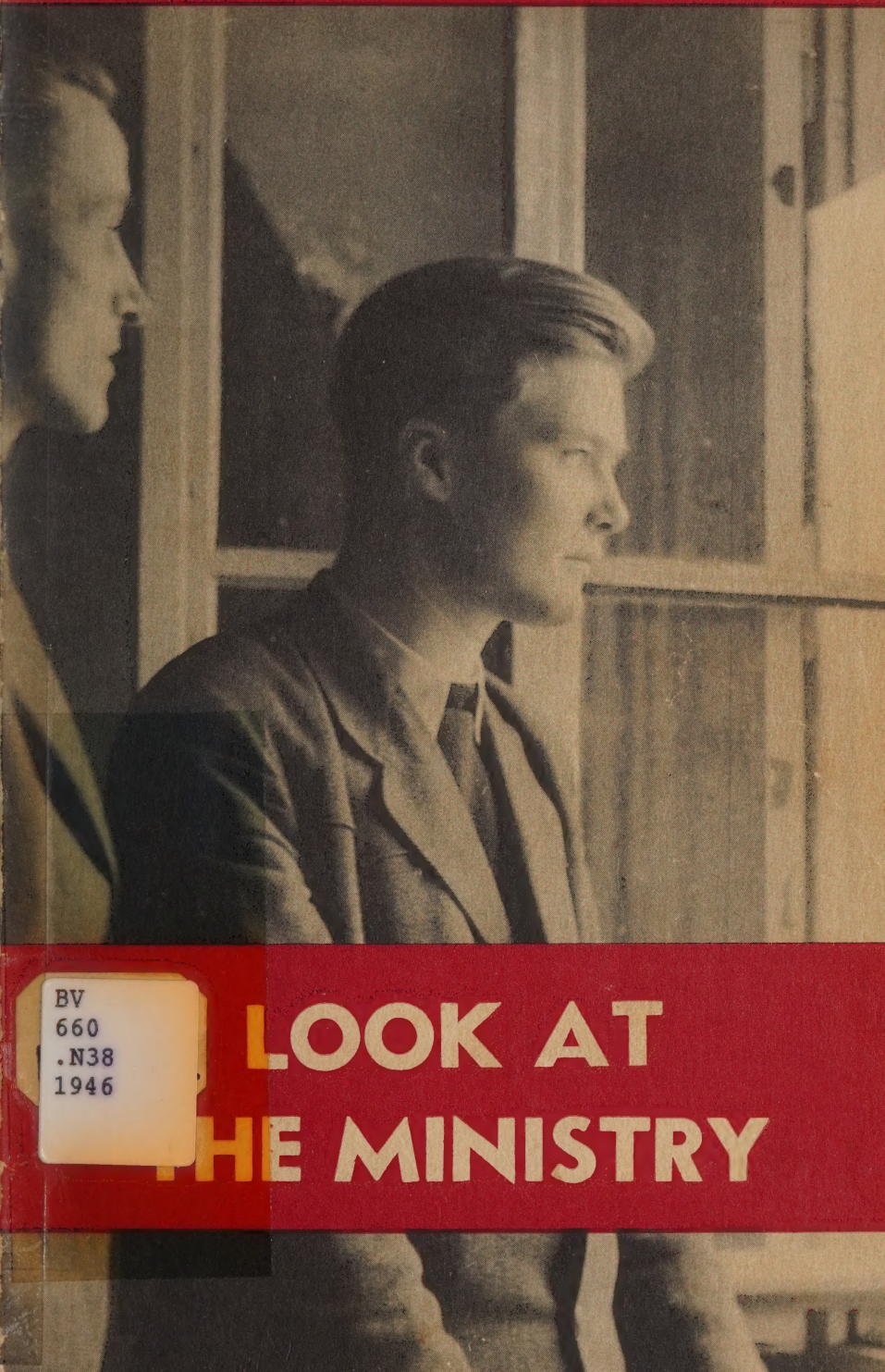


By John Oliver Nelson



BV
660
.N38
1946

LOOK AT THE MINISTRY



BV 660 .N38 1946
Nelson, John Oliver, 1909-
Look at the ministry

One High Trail

Most young men are eager for glimpses of careers which MIGHT lie ahead of them. This book—its pictures provided by dozens of gracious friends—sets out to provide a vista into one great kind of job. Yet it succeeds, if it makes any reader more deeply concerned to invest his life for his Highest and his fellow men.



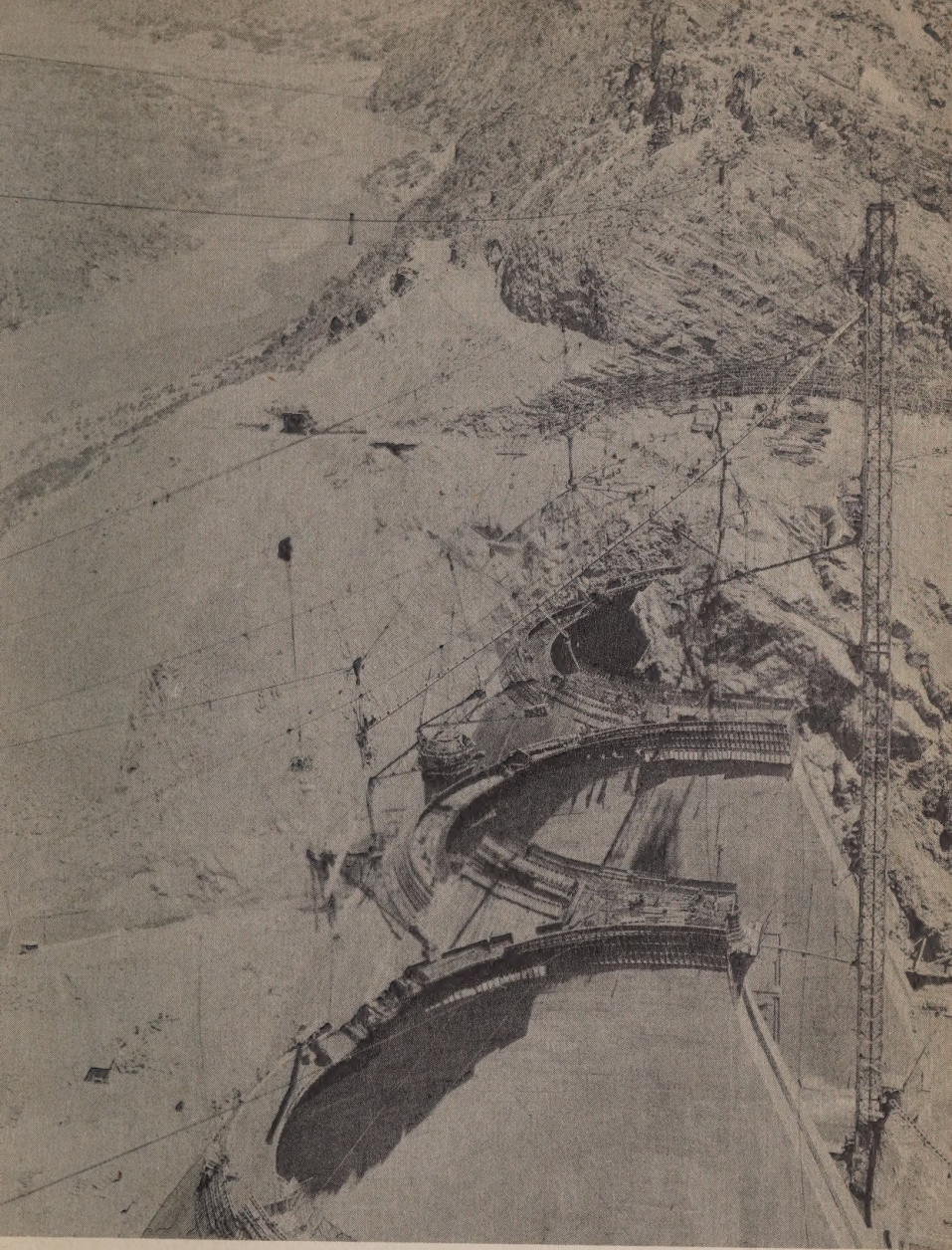
This Generation Is Strong Enough

We're taller than human beings ever were before—broader, huskier, healthier, longer-living. We go in for sports more eagerly and expertly. We are strong in ideas and convictions too—keen for freedom, fairplay among all people, ready to learn and know.

That all means we have power in this generation, dynamic which can change our whole civilization. The big question is, How?

How make the "new world" young people impatiently hope for? What are the skills and the jobs and the attitudes—BEYOND being good sportsmen—that we need?

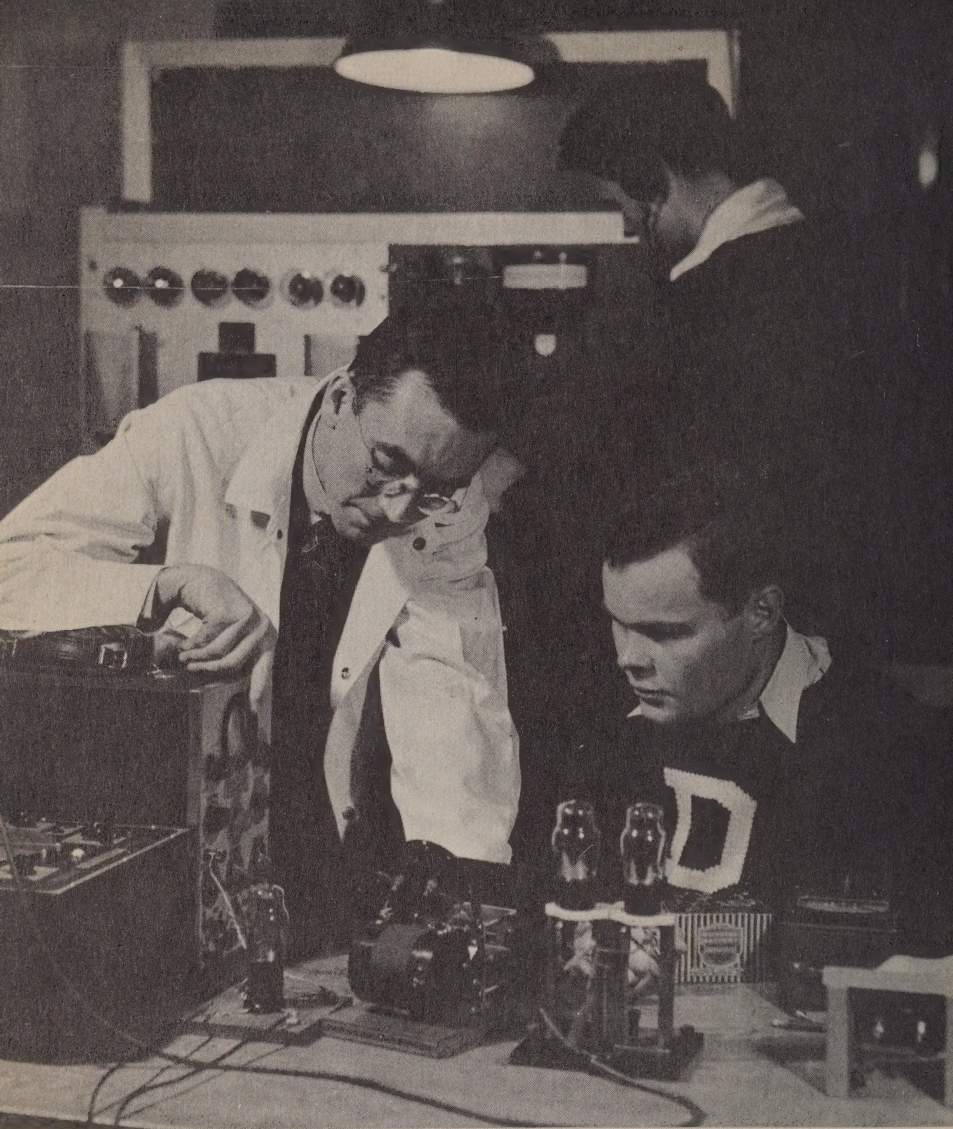




Moving Mountains, Making Rivers

Some young men live for the vision of vast engineering feats yet to come—bridges to build, torrents to impound, highways to fling across continents. Even to have a small draftsman's part in such gigantic jobs is their highest goal.

These days they say engineers are the only ones with "faith which can move mountains". That skill, with slide-rule and steel and concrete as its tools, is one dazzling career ahead today.



Lure of Speed, Television, Electronics

Thousands of young men are keen for technology, which does thrilling things in this mechanical age. They will spend their working life in labs, making electronic gadgets, static-less radio and television, faster planes, better plastics. (Some may even perfect a bigger, more terrifying Bomb. For science has always insisted it's not concerned with social effects of its discoveries—only in adventures among facts themselves, and in salaries these may bring.) A lot of the noblest minds of today head for technology as a career.



Plowing The Good Earth

To work the soil, under broad skies, will be the life work of millions of strong young men. They choose that not "because they can't get a city job", usually, but because they love the land and the kind of people who live on it. They sow and cultivate and harvest and market products on a billion acres of America.

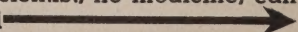


Science Really Serves, Too

Medical schools are crowded these days, with hosts of young men eager to heal pain or even just let loose an abundant curiosity on "what makes human beings tick". To save a person's life, or an arm or a leg—or a plague-ridden city—is a glory.

Thus young fellows who make a MISSION out of medicine or research are making their lives count tremendously.

The same is true of lawyer, teacher, salesman, mechanic, farmer—whenever such a man sees and lives for a bigger purpose than money-making, or power over others.

But what about people whose problem no scientist, no medicine, can help? There are millions of people in need 



BUT WHAT ABOUT HUMAN NEEDS?

Who's going to devote his life to the cynical slum lad or the ragged, hungry children of a hundred lands?

Think about this: What are the big jobs this generation has to do? It's plain that we've done far better with things than with people in our world—advanced further in science and business than in relations among human beings. There's more fear, hunger, hate, and distrust than ever before—just at a time when these problems could be faced more successfully than ever before.

It looks as though the BIG jobs nowadays are those with people—their motives, inner reactions, needs, wrongdoing, tenseness, arrogance, selfishness—and nobility.

Are there enough young men saying—with their lives—"Count on ME to tackle the deepest human needs today!"—?







When We Need Perspective

Is the worker just a cog in the machine or a vote in a labor movement? Are the big questions of touch-and-go youth to go unanswered? The sign is out: **WANTED, SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP.**





It comes down to cases: who is ready to deal with broken lives?

Want to Help People?

Consider those jobs which deal with human beings as PERSONS not as customers or cases or patients or bosses or workers. Such jobs aren't easy. They're not over-paid. Nor are they a ticket to great prestige and "the smart set". But they do make, for thousands, the satisfying investment of their 50 years—more or less—of a career. Here are a few:

Child psychologist
Choral leader
Community-chest worker
County farm agent
Criminologist
Dean
Diplomat
Housing-program director

Labor relations adviser
Personnel counselor
Probation and parole leader
Recreation director
Scouter or "Y" executive
Social case worker
Social group worker
Teacher

From the religious standpoint, a young man may be "called" to such a task just as completely as a minister is called to his work. It's the Christian view that God does need people in such jobs—and that He summons certain people to them, as to any worthwhile job a Christian can do.

Be sure that you can make your job YOUR means of serving people and serving God, through duties well and honestly done. That's what is meant by "Christian vocation" in any field of work. Will your life be invested for self, or things, or PEOPLE?





DIFFERENT SORT OF LINE-UP

SOME young fellows this year are lining up for a special sort of helpfulness among people. They are setting out to tackle human problems **THROUGH THE CHURCH** and with the primary purpose of relating people with God.

These young men say that the real tragedy of human life is its unnatural effort to live without God. They have begun to realize that the person who shows God among men is the one who helps them at their deepest level of need. We'll look at some ways in which Christian ministries are being made real among people.



When Church Went Into Uniform

In war the Church followed men to the South Pacific or to station hospitals with many a keen young minister—indispensable in crisis. But people need "chaplains" in peacetime just as much.



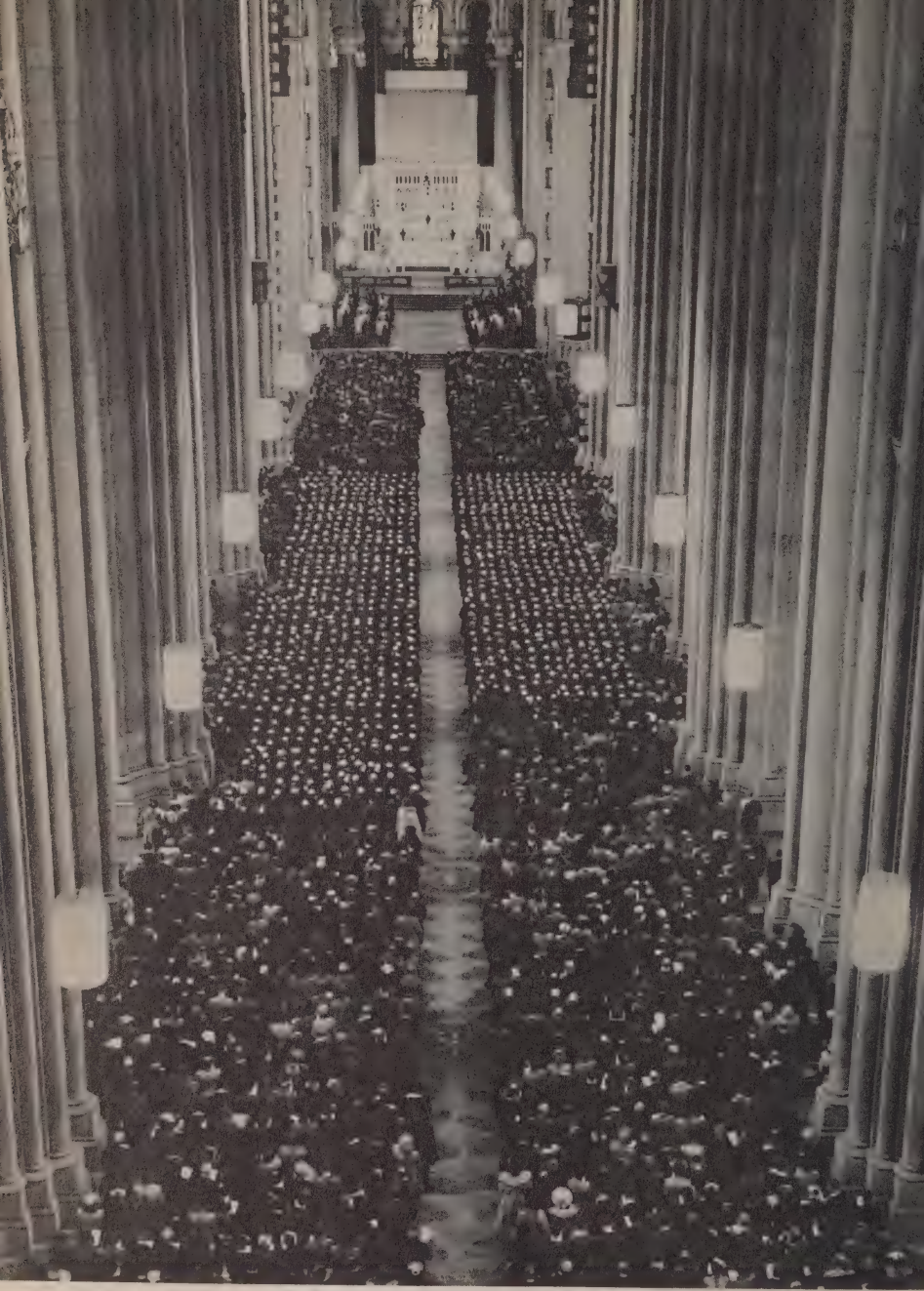
Small Church, Large Horizons

What's the most important influence in a little town. School? Lodge? General store? You'll find the little white church doing more—if it has a good minister—than any other force, for the character and happiness of people there.

The label "rural" goes on any community of less than 2500. Rural churches are very really the spiritual backbone of America. From them come most city church members, and a large majority of city church leaders and teachers. The country church is a remarkable seed-bed of Christian culture.

But right now, thousands of village and country parishes are entirely without pastors. Think of what one dedicated young life, serving a small-town church, can do for the Kingdom of God. As pastor there, a young man finds his influence reaching far out to the horizon of the countryside—and farther, to the heart of America.





Unlike the rural church in all except purpose and service to life, the vast cathedral downtown has a great parish program, raises great funds for missions and social action, helps thousands to worship.



Church Reaches Out to Human Need

In cities, or in the tropics, or in the hinterland of America, it isn't the buildings that bear the Christian message. It's men of power and vision, eager to tell the Good News to everybody. The key to a new civilization is the man willing to devote his life to needs of people in the name of God.

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Next Sunday in Thousands of Churches

Define "church"? An old Latin description was UBI TRES—"where there are three", translating a phrase of Jesus. Most congregations are small, made up of ordinary people. Often churchgoers aren't the majority in town (only 58% of Americans have any religious affiliation). So for every person at church there's more than one at home. Yet the churchgoing people of any community, and any nation, are the conscience and spiritual power of that community or nation. Their ideals and attitudes, and their energy, have for centuries determined the great movements of Western peoples and their history.

This means that the earnest, trained minister as pastor in a neighborhood has a strategic job. He deals with people's responsibility to God and to each other—and he's the only one who does that with disinterested concern. Through a Christian family of families, the parish, he may convince people they're indeed members of the family of God.







In Strikes, In Sunday Schools

Ministers may take the mike to address workers at a strike rally, or they may lead children into Christian truth in a mission church school—but in both cases they stand for fairness and the dynamic of the Christian faith.





Man of Letters with Lettermen

As teacher of Christianity on campus, the minister can make the difference between sound and unsound character for hundreds. But he must be keen, sociable, manly, squarely trying to live his faith as well as teach it. Scores of campuses lack and want that sort of ministry right now.



Chapel: Are Students Listening?

They are if their campus chaplain has what it takes to make Christian worship and thinking real among undergraduates. If he does, he holds the key to the most significant change students can undergo in college: their discovery that life has a central core of divine purpose, their vocation in God. It is the privilege of the college pastor to provide for them that "greatest thing in the world". Hundreds of campuses need dedicated and dynamic ministers who can do that in these next years.



By Lake and Campfire

Ministers to youth have all outdoors as their church today, a vast sanctuary.





Sir, Here's the Fix I'm In

Ministers have no greater privilege than helping people with personal problems—situations at home, marriage, educational plans, moral questions, trouble with the law, or straight questions of Christian belief. A pastor has to be a good listener and a wise, sensitive adviser.



He Speaks of Serenity

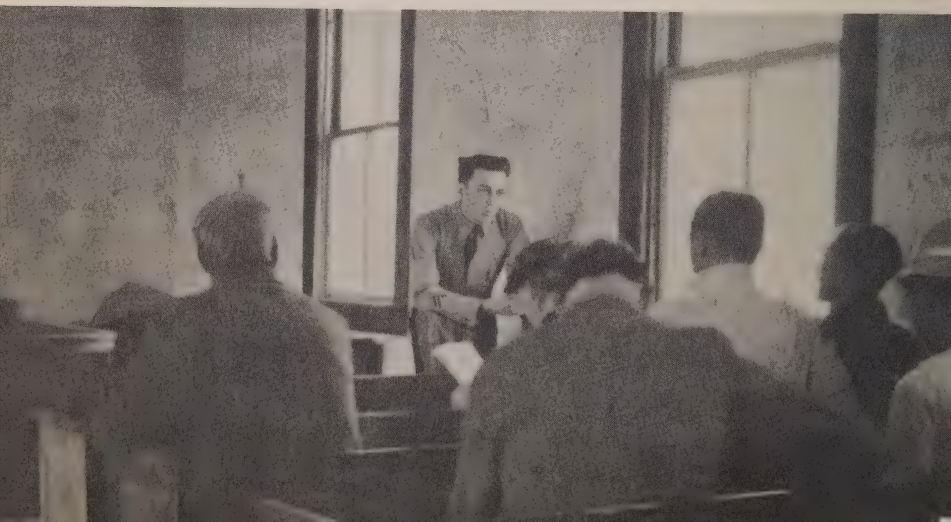
For a buzzing, distracted day like our own, the Church gathers up the quietness and beauty and assurance of the ages to give people a sure grip on life. When a minister leads in Christian worship—devoutly and skilfully—he brings that ancient word, “Be still and know that I am God”, which rekindles vision and inner strength.

Worship restores people's perspective.



Procession Into Faith

Whether a minister baptizes GIs in the Mediterranean or patiently teaches mountaineers in a mission, his effort is always to reach out for others. That takes ingenuity and often some pretty unconventional means. But the minister leads a constant procession of people into Christian experience.





You'll Find Different Pictures

Every able young man who becomes a minister knows the job isn't "all roses" by any means. As he rolls up his sleeves to tackle the ministry, he's aware of plenty that's wrong with his Church and its leaders. He knows about smugness and pompousness and tameness, over-professionalism, stuffiness, arbitrariness. He knows that denominational differences can become an evil—though he wouldn't for a minute trade for a system where honest difference of belief is crushed out! He knows that the Church is always tempted to relax into being an institution, whereas to be faithful to Christ and this generation it must be also a lively movement.

But those other pictures of the ministry don't keep him from saying, today, "Right here's where I invest my life—in the Christian ministry." One day most of Jesus' hearers, some of them young people, decided he was asking too much of them. They shrugged their shoulders, and started off down the hill in great crowds. Jesus looked after them, and turned to his few disciples with the wistful question, "Will you also go away?" That handful of strong young men, whom He had chosen to change the world, said: "To whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life." They stayed—and did change the world.

WHAT SORT OF YOUNG MEN ARE ACCEPTING THAT CHALLENGE THESE DAYS, TO BECOME MINISTERS? LOOK AT SOME OF THEM WHO RECENTLY HAVE BEEN FINDING GOD'S CALL IN THIS JOB . . .





Through Seminary On Ice

This professional hockey player, Bill Spurrier of Newton, Mass., worked his way through divinity school playing weekly at Madison Square Garden, heading for the ministry which became his goal in college days.



"Dr. I.Q." Gives An Answer

At the height of his radio fame, Jimmy McClain of Louisville, Ky., decided to trade his \$2000 weekly for seminary and the ministry—after a career that started with college debating and drama and led to fame at the mike.



War Strengthened His Devotion

Even after seminary, "Lefty" Ballard of Whitesboro, N. Y. enlisted, worked his way to a captaincy, was wounded in Europe, and returned to his ministry with broader ability and greater certainty that this is God's way for him.



Music In His Ministry

Deciding against a career as a musician, Norman Spicer of Quincy, Ill., took his seminary major in church music, planning to use all the stored-up wealth of Christian musical tradition to deepen and enoble human life.



Into Human Engineering

Recently five graduate engineers at the big Schenectady, N. Y. electric plant left their drafting-boards and labs to attend seminary and prepare for the ministry here and abroad. Human engineering, they call it.



Interference for the Ministry

After being a four-letter man in college, and a successful football coach later, Harry Suttner of Pittsburgh, Pa. decided that the ministry is the biggest job he can tackle. He shifted his career plans, entered seminary.



Gallantry for a New Frontier

One of few surviving officers of the 34th Division, Capt. Cleo Buxton of Lansing, Mich. chose the ministry in Italy, bringing to seminary here an agriculture degree, a Silver Star for gallantry, and a good tenor voice.



It Takes All Kinds, But One Purpose

A seminary room at recess during exam study may offer every musical instrument from guitar to bagpipe—and men of infinitely varied backgrounds knit together in one great fellowship of faith and intention.

He's Planning Something

Any boy with a ready smile, frankness, strength, and ability to "make hay" for a great cause, may well **THINK ABOUT** the ministry. More: his parents, pastor, and other advisers may well encourage him to.



70

These glimpses of the sort of men who choose the ministry today show how strongly some young people feel the purpose of God as it unfolds for this generation.

Every year some 2500 young fellows line up to be counted in America for the ministry. It will take their devoted work, and that of hundreds of others, to make the Christian message effective in our time.

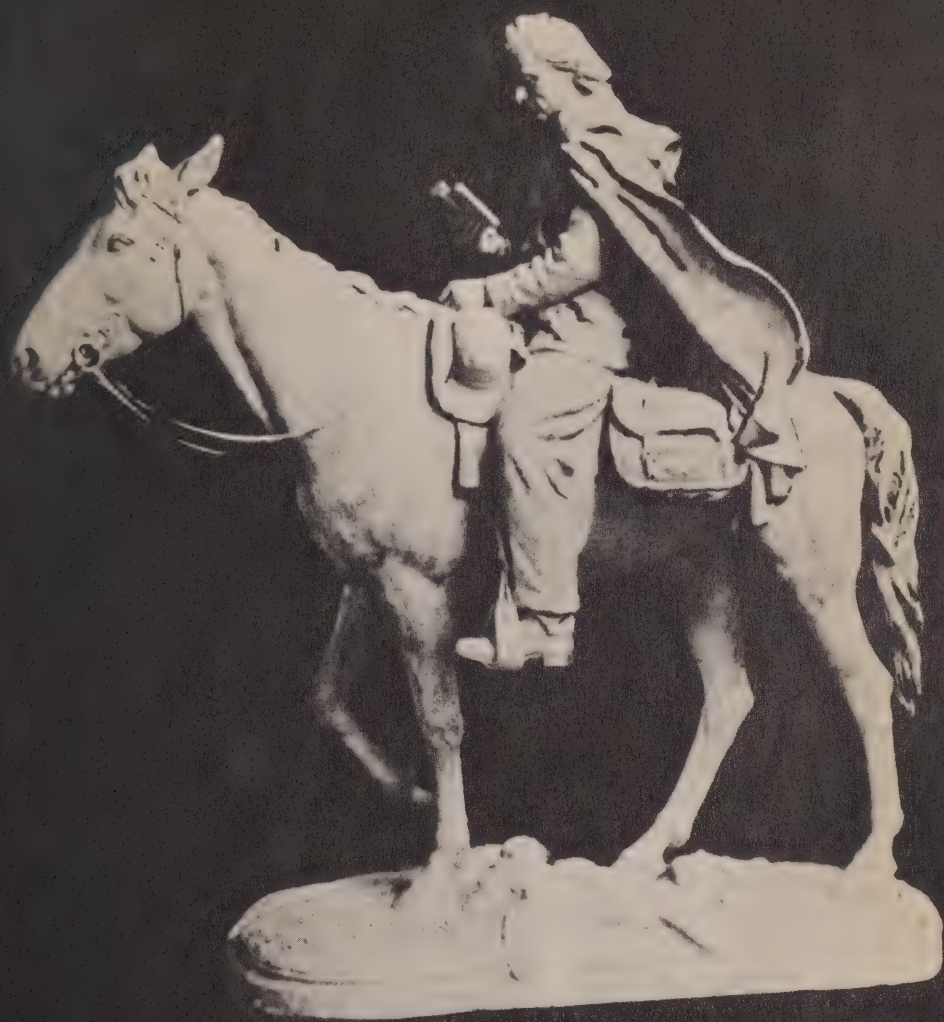
Does the guiding hand of God, which has reached down into the careers of these fellows, find you planning the BIGGEST job you can do, using your talent, training, and background—whether in the ministry or in some other worthwhile calling? The decision to accept God's leading as you decide on your life work is the most important one you can make.

Do you line up, too, to be counted?



BUT GRANTED THAT ABLE YOUNG PEOPLE DO CHOOSE THE MINISTRY—HOW MUCH CAN A MINISTER REALLY ACCOMPLISH AMID ALL THE VAST FORCES AND CONFLICTS OF MODERN LIFE?

LOOK AT WHAT SOME GREAT CHURCH LEADERS HAVE DONE IN DAYS PAST. THEY GIVE SOME CLUE AS TO WHAT GREAT CHURCH LEADERSHIP CAN DO NOW . . .



By Nature a Frontiersman

Explorers and pioneers have often been ministers. For it's the business of the man of God to carry the Christian message into new lands, new social situations, new areas of people's lives. He is God's explorer.



Power of the Preacher

The word "parson" is just "person" mispronounced—for the minister was originally known as **THE** person in his town or neighborhood. As bearer of God's truth, he settled disputes, taught the people, baptized, married, and buried the townspeople. From the days of the apostles themselves—humble men wearing no glittering robes—the real power of the minister has been his spiritual authority, his deep wisdom in the things of God.

Thus a painting by the last-generation Finnish artist, Edelfelt, entitled **THE SERMON**, records the sublimity and dignity of humble folk at church under the open skies, their attention fixed on the words of the preacher. This man can influence those people for good more fully than any teacher, businessman, or statesman. For to him is given access—in preaching as in counseling—to his congregation's emotions, wills, and highest aspirations.

In the age-long succession of Church leaders, many thousands have been true prophets, building the Kingdom of Heaven in people and in communities. Some have certainly changed the course of civilization in the Western world during the past 400 years. Largely through preaching and living the power of God, they have shown again and again what dynamic Christianity can do for freedom of the human soul in God.



Knox Made Scotland's Destiny

When the Roman Catholic cardinal in 1546 burned at the stake a young Protestant preacher, the martyr's stoutest adherent was another young priest named John Knox—whose convictions soon cost him 19 months as a galley-slave for France. But shortly after that he turned up as chaplain to the English king, later a pastor in Switzerland, and a helper in the translation of the Bible into English there.

Finally daring to return to Scotland after several short visits, Knox quickly became a symbol of both Scottish national independence and Protestantism. He helped make the Church there fully Protestant in its organization and belief. With seizure of its lands by nobles, his Church became, from one of the richest, one of the poorest in the world—a fact which has always made it a champion of the common people against wealth and pretension.

Mary "Queen of Scots", shrewd and attractive royal widow, tried in many personal interviews to win Knox to her Roman Catholic faith and her political power—to absolutely no avail. The fiery preacher was like a rock. So it was he who preached the coronation sermon for her successor, James VI—with none of the bishops present who are shown with Mary in the picture above. History records his "having influenced not merely the religion but the character of the nation more than any other man in Scottish history."



Wesley Led Peaceful Revolution

Shortly after John Wesley, a high-church Oxford graduate, returned from unsuccessful missionary work in our state of Georgia, he found in a Moravian prayermeeting his "heart strangely warmed" at hearing a quotation from Luther. That was in 1738. Immediately his preaching, like that of several friends, took fire. He addressed throngs of the poor, factory workers, outcasts, in open fields and from wagon end-gates. "Methodism" became new Christian power for the masses.

Anglican churches, askance at his social emphasis and emotion, denied him their pulpits—as at his father's old parish, Epworth, where he preached instead from his father's tombstone to crowds for a week. A great Church soon grew from the "societies" and "conferences" he set up, and when he died in 1791 there were 500 preachers and 120,000 Methodists. That movement literally prevented a British parallel of the savage French Revolution, by giving new vision to the poor. "No other of his race has been so extensive or so abiding in his influence for good"—than John Wesley.



Oberlin Rebuilt Community

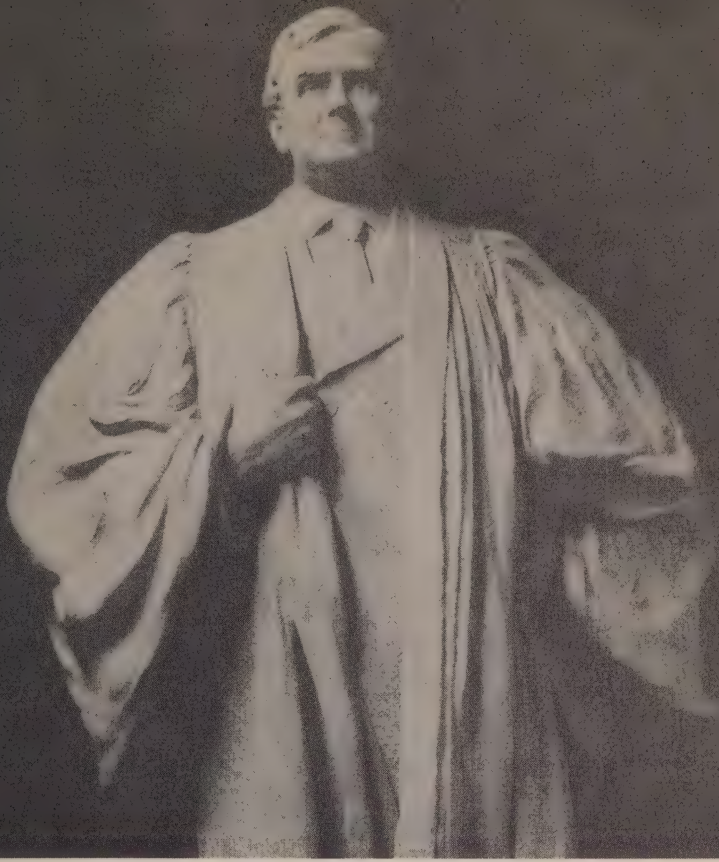
When in 1767 John Frederic Oberlin, medical graduate at Strasbourg, prayerfully accepted the pastorate at Waldsbach in the inaccessible Vosges mountains, it was roadless and sterile and its people uncouth and wretched. In 59 wise, patient years of astonishing devotion he built schools, set up the first kindergartens in history, planted orchards, blasted out roads—and had an American college named after him. That historic ministry in an obscure hamlet has made Oberlin the symbol of greatness in the rekindling of rural community life anywhere.



Drummond Won Campuses for Christ

While a divinity student in Edinburgh in 1873, Henry Drummond was warmed by the profound evangelism of the Great American, Moody. He soon became the most successful Christian worker among students that the world has seen. Both minister and professor of natural science, he preached Christ in university terms. He organized hundreds of undergraduates to preach Christ themselves, on "Holiday Missions".

Coming to America, he stirred many a campus, helping bring about the great outpouring of student Christian life in missions and evangelism in the 1890's. Thousands of students in Britain, Germany, America, and Australia were won by Drummond to a warm, logical faith. The world of Christian devotion still today feels the effects of his ministry.



Brooks Was Pastor To America

Graduating from Harvard in 1855, Phillips Brooks took up teaching, at which he was a complete failure. Second-best seemed to be his gloomy decision to attend seminary in Virginia. Even there he showed little brilliance. His class sermon on *The Simplicity of Christ* was shortly disposed of by a classmate as containing "very little simplicity and no Christ".

But as a pastor in Philadelphia, the young man found new power in his preaching—crowded churches, eager hearers. As his eloquence grew his personal devotion deepened: his hymn, "O Little Town of Bethlehem" he wrote there. A call back to Boston brought his preaching to old Trinity Church, and later to the majestic new Trinity which he helped design. Here his influence spread through the land, a great, warm voice of Christian assurance and understanding. Made an Episcopal bishop—with colleagues' reservations over his "liberalism"—he was one of the great leaders of American thinking.

The secret of Brooks' power was his own unmistakable devotion to God. Like Drummond he never married, tirelessly giving himself to friends and to his person-centered preaching and writing. People said they found God in Phillips Brooks as nowhere else.



Berggrav Stood Like a Rock

As Nazis and Quislings took Norway over in war, Bishop Eivind Berggrav, head of the Norwegian State Church (Lutheran) might understandably have collaborated. Instead, his rock-hard resistance of every denial of Norway's freedom led to his being fenced in with barbed wire and Nazi guards, the key figure in national morale. The cross awarded him by England's Archbishop of Canterbury is just one symbol of the gratitude of the free world.



Kagawa Is An Apostle In the Slums

Born of a concubine into a wealthy Japanese household in 1888, Toyohiko Kagawa found the crisis of his boyhood in acceptance of Christianity, a choice which cut him off penniless. But his Christian witness became amazingly vital. He studied earnestly in Japan and America, despite a serious eye disease and tuberculosis. He made the cause of the slum-dweller his own. He brought Christian idealism into national action, through housing reforms, consumer cooperatives as a distinctive Christian economic system, hospitals, literacy campaigns, and creative Christian pacifism. Even during war his flaming spirit was unquenched, leaving him one of the several most influential men in Japan, a remarkable Christian.



Bonhoeffer Assaulted Tyranny

For taking part in the historic 1944 plot against Hitler, 33-year-old pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer was hanged by guards in the Flossenburg concentration camp as American forces neared in 1945.

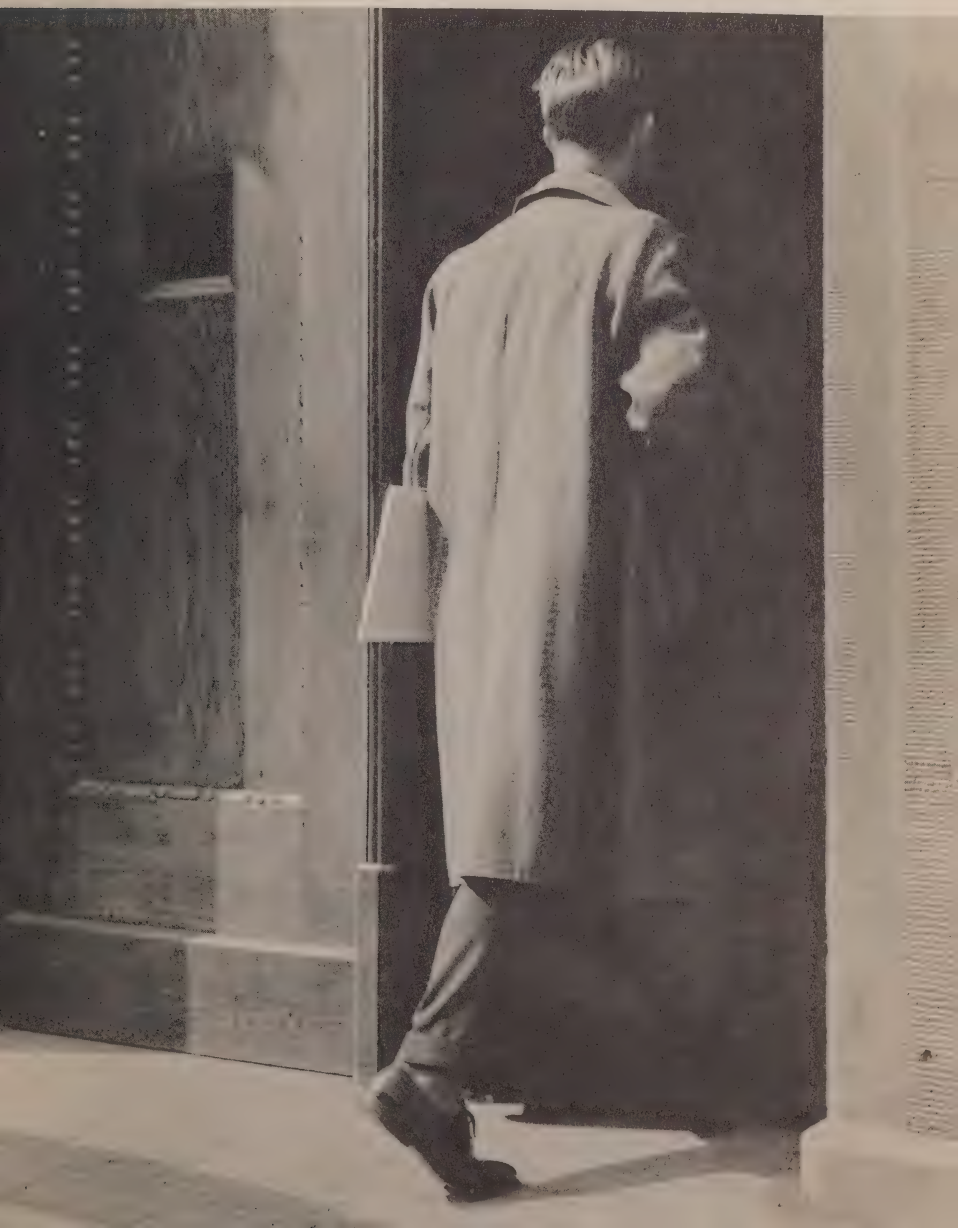
In America years before as a student, and again when war began, his theology held faith and politics separate, until Christian indignation thrust him back into the thick of Nazism in 1939. Head of the secret theological seminary of the Confessional Church, political agent in England and Sweden, uncompromising preacher of Christian justice, he was a marked man. His fearless part in the climactic effort against Hitler within Germany was typical of his new-found Christian testimony.

The name "Bonhoeffer" is fresh witness to the fact that great Christian devotion kindles great leadership for freedom.

But When It Comes Down To Me

Far more could be said about great Christian ministers: the world is vastly different because of them. Greater ones we need today.

But, with no greatness offered or promised, what God asks of every young man right now is a very simple, personal step. He asks that I quietly, prayerfully ENTER INTO HIS WILL for my life.





No Leap—More Like A Balance

If I have a call to the ministry, I needn't expect it to be a tense, sudden affair. I don't find myself in mid-air.

Rather, after my first step—choosing to enter into God's whole will for my life—my next may be a thoughtful **BALANCING** of all I know of myself alongside all I know of His will and work:

Can the ministry use more of my talents and training than any other job? I can test my aptitudes, list them, and find out.

Do I find the Christian gospel the one greatest power in the world? I may have to study my Bible and history books to answer that.





Get Used To Being A Leader

When God calls anybody to a leader's job, He seems to give him equipment for it. So a man needs, as a call to the ministry, more than just an inner certainty: part of God's call is that He equips us to do our life work. A young man thinking about the ministry may well ask himself a few questions like these:

Do people follow my lead—or am I always the follower?
Is my voice clear and my frame sturdy?

Are my school grades consistently above-average, indicating I can be a leader in ideas?

A fellow without such equipment often can develop it—through Scouting, sports, club life, and self discipline. Then there's schooling . . .



College? Yessir, Here I Am

Anybody with determination and ingenuity CAN go to college these days, if he's willing to work, earnest about studying, and wise in securing and using money. Most national communions have funds for those in training for the ministry. But many a man makes out just on his own.



What Shall I Sign Up For?

Besides all the varied activities of college life—from the brass band to the Student Christian Association—a student thinking about the ministry takes as broadly cultural course as he can find. Here is how the American Association of Theological Schools says a man should judge courses in college as he prepares for seminary: it applies, too, to anyone planning a job which deals with people:

1. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in the ability to use certain tools of the educated man:

(a) The ability to write English clearly and correctly. English composition should have this as a specific purpose, but this purpose should also be cultivated in all written work.

(b) The ability to think clearly. In some persons this ability is cultivated through courses in philosophy or specifically in logic. In others it is cultivated by the use of scientific method, or by dealing with critical problems in connection with literary and historical documents.

(c) The ability to read at least one foreign language, and in some circumstances more than one.

2. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in acquaintance with the world in which he lives:

(a) The world of men and ideas. This is aided by familiarity with English, literature, philosophy, psychology, and the social sciences.

(b) The world of nature. This is aided by familiarity with the natural sciences, including actual laboratory work.

3. The college work of a pre-seminary student should result in a sense of achievement.

(a) The degree of his mastery of his fields of study is more important than the credits and grades which he accumulates.

(b) The sense of achievement may be encouraged through academic concentration, or through "honors" work, or through other plans for increasingly independent work with as much initiative on the student's part as he is able to use with profit.



Every man training for the ministry is better off if sometime in his career he does some pretty tough manual work—either in a work camp or project, or in actual industry for wages. Some church groups now provide a full year of voluntary or subsistence service for young people. The man who has worked with his hands—honestly and earnestly, not as a stunt—is better equipped to lead and preach among workers.

Getting Your Hands Dirty Pays







Seminary: Learning, Faith, Friendship

Both in class and in Christian friendship with faculty and fellows, the years of seminary are among the best of any man's life. It all LASTS.



STERLING



Mixing gladly with people is a "must" in preparation for the ministry.



Big Thresholds Before You

A Scripture verse says, "Behold, I have set before thee an open door . . ." The ministry means entering life in its largest dimensions.



ON YOUR MARK? GET SET

Choosing your direction and your running-mate are the two biggest decisions you'll make. Don't drift into either: keep your eye on the ultimate goal, muscles taut, ambition tingling to do your best.

These have been hasty glances at the ministry. It's one way forward. It responds to human need, to urgent church opportunity around the world, to a glorious tradition, and to God's will in a man's life. For effectiveness and inner serenity it is as rewarding a career as a man can follow.

But you'll likely not become a minister. Few do, in each generation; perhaps fewer than God really calls for that job.

Whoever you are, though, you are called to follow out a divine destiny in your living. Pray about your way ahead. For in the will of God for ALL His sons there is a life work of which each can say, with our Lord Christ: **TO THIS END WAS I BORN, AND FOR THIS CAUSE CAME I INTO THE WORLD, THAT I SHOULD BEAR WITNESS UNTO THE TRUTH.**





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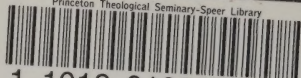
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